

Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 104893 TOSEC 040083

FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRS - FRED BROWN

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS: BEECHER ON SALT

NO. 8

1. HERewith THE FULL TEXT OF ARTICLE BY WILLIAM BEECHER
APPEARING IN BOSTON GLOBE AND WASHINGTON STAR MAY 7
ENTITLED "SOVIETS SIGNAL TERMS OF SALT COMPROMISE."

2. BEGIN TEXT:

MOSCOW -- THE SOVIET UNION IS CONTEMPLATING A CUT OF 10 PER-
CENT IN THE STRATEGIC FORCES CEILING AS PART OF THE COM-
PROMISE AIMED AT ACHIEVING A SALT 11 TREATY THIS YEAR.

THIS BECAME APPARENT IN AN UNUSUALLY CANDID INTERVIEW THIS
WEEK WITH SOME OF THE SOVIET UNION'S TOP SALT EXPERTS.

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GEORGI SVIATOV, HEAD OF THE DEFENSE TECHNOLOGICAL SECTION
OF THE INFLUENTIAL INSTITUTE OF THE USA AND CANADA, SAID
HE COULD CONCEIVE OF A SALT 11 AGREEMENT CONTAINING THE
FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

-- A 10-PERCENT REDUCTION IN THE CELING OF 2,400 LONG-
RANGE MISSILES AND BOMBERS TENTATIVELY AGREED TO AT
VLADIVOSTOK IN 1974.

--"SOME LIMITATION" ON SOVIET DEPLOYMENT OF THEIR CONTROVERSIAL BACKFIRE BOMBER.

--A BAN ON U.S. CRUISE MISSILES ATTACK SUBMARINES, SURFACE SHIPS AND LAND LAUNCHERS. AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES, HOWEVER, WOULD BE PERMITTED. --

--AND "MAYBE A LIMITATION ON THE NUMBER OF TESTS" OF INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILES.

SVIATOV, WHO A COUPLE OF TIMES NOTED HE WAS ONLY VENTURING A PERSONAL VIEW, NOT AN OFFICIAL POSITION, NONETHELESS WAS FLANKED BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR, THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY AND OTHER PRINCIPAL SALT EXPERTS OF THE INSTITUTE.

EXPERIENCED DIPLOMATS, WHEN INFORMED OF THE INTERVIEW, SAID IT WAS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THE POINTS WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE WITHOUT ADVANCE CLEARANCE AT THE VERY TOP OF THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. -

THE INTERVIEW SEEMS AN ATTEMPT TO SEND A MORE DETAILED SIGNAL IN ADVANCE OF THE RESUMPTION OF SALT NEGOTIATIONS IN GENEVA ON WEDNESDAY AT THE SUB-CABINET LEVEL, AND THE RESUMPTION OF DISCUSSIONS THERE ON MAY 18 BETWEEN SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS R. VANCE AND SOVIET FOREIGN MINISTER ANDREI A. GROMYKO. -

THE TERMS OUTLINED HERE SEEK A COMPROMISE BETWEEN SOVIET UNCLASSIFIED

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INSISTENCE ON RETURNING TO THE VLADIVOSTOK FORMULA WHILE CONSTRAINING THE AMERICAN CRUISE MISSILE REDUCTIONS NOW AND TO PUT SOME RESTRAINT ON TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENTS OF ICBMS BY LIMITING THE NUMBER OF TESTS EACH YEAR TO SIX ON EACH SIDE.

THE SOVIET OFFICIAL SAID FROM HIS PERSPECTIVE PUTTING MAJOR CONSTRAINTS ON AMERICAN AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES "DOESN'T MATTER." HE POINTED OUT THAT SUCH WEAPONS, IF PLACED ON U.S. BOMBERS, WOULD HAVE TO TAKE THE PLACE OF SHORT-RANGE ATTACK MISSILES (SRAMS).

SOME KIND OF LIMITATION ON CRUISE-MISSILE RANGE WOULD MAKE SENSE, SVIATOV SAID, BUT THE CHOICE SHOULD BE UP TO AMERICAN COMMANDERS WHETHER THEY WANT THE SLOWER, LONGER RANGE CRUISE MISSILE OR THE SHORTER RANGE BUT IMPOSSIBLE-TO-SHOOT-DOWN SRAM.

U.S. SPECIALISTS HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT A RANGE OF

ABOUT 1,550 MILES FOR THE CRUISE MISSILE. THE SRAM HAS A RANGE OF ABOUT 100 MILES.

YURI STRELTSOV , WHO HEADS THE ARMS CONTROL SECTION OF THE INSTITUTE, SAID THAT HE WOULD PREFER THAT ALL CRUISE-MISSILE TESTS BE BANNED UNTIL A SALT 111 AGREEMENT CAN BE WORKED OUT.

A TEST MORATORIUM WAS URGED SOME TIME AGO BY SEN. EDWARD M. KENNEDY. D-MASS., AND A GROUP OF OTHER U.S. LAWMAKERS BUT WAS CHALLENGED BY THEN-SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER.

STRELTSOV EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT IF THE SOVIET UNION AGREED TO A 1,550-MILE-RANGE LIMITATION ON THE AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES, THE UNITED STATES MIGHT LATER DEVELOP A MORE EFFICIENT FUEL THAT WOULD EXTEND THIS RANGE CONSIDERABLY, WITHOUT ANY OPPORTUNITY FOR SOVIET VERIFICATION.
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HE ALSO NOTED THAT IN THE CASE OF SEA-BASED CRUISE MISSILES, VERIFICATION WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE, EXPECIALLY IF BASED ON SUBMARINES. AND IF THE SOVIETS DEVELOP ADVANCED CRUISE MISSILES FOR THEIR SUBS, THIS WOULD POSE A COSTLY AIR DEFENSE PROBLEM FOR THE UNITED STATES. HE SUGGESTED IT WOULD COST THE UNITED STATES 10 BILLION DOLLARS TO BEEF UP ITS SKIMPY AIR DEFENSES TO COUNTER SUCH A THREAT.

DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAY ANOTHER REASON FOR THE RUSSIAN ATTEMPT TO CURB THE CRUISE MISSILE IS ITS RELUCTANCE TO PUT OUT AN ENORMOUS INVESTMENT TO TRY TO MATCH U.S. WEAPONS TECHNOLOGY.

BOTH MEN WERE WORRIED ABOUT THE SO-CALLED MX MISSILE, WHICH CARTER OFFERED TO BAN AS PART OF A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE INVOLVING REDUCTIONS DOWN TO 1,800 TO 2,000 ON EACH SIDE.

THE PROPOSED ABILITY OF THE MX TO DESTROY SUPERHARDENED RUSSIAN MISSILE SILOS WOULD BE COUNTER TO THE SPIRIT OF SALT, THEY SAID, AND IF THE RUSSINAS FOLLOWED SUIT AND DEPLOYED LARGE MOBILE MISSILES IN UNDERGROUND TUNNELS, AS CONCEIVED FOR MX, NEITHER SIDE COULD VERIFY WITH CONFIDENCE EACH OTHER'S FORCE LEVELS.

END TEXT. CHRISTOPHER

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